

Editor's Note: The 2006 All Academic Team members were asked the following question: In 2007 11th graders will be required to take the ACT college entrance exam to identify students needing remedial help before reaching college. Do you believe this will better prepare students for college? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

These are their responses:

No, I do not. This type of screening comes too late in the student's career to affect change. Students should be screened for remedial help earlier in their lives (whether by the ACT exam or a different test). Also, it must be taken into consideration that every student going to college will probably be taking the ACT already and will know if they need help, and most college

bound students won't need help.

Monica Gaines
FCHS

The 11th grade is much too late to begin identifying students needing remedial help before college. However, I do think that students would benefit from being required to take the ACT as juniors because it would encourage them to begin considering their post-graduation plans. Also, it would place the students' progress against a national standard rather than just comparing it to students across Kentucky, as is the case with CATS testing.

Erin Overstreet
FCHS

Requiring 11th graders to take the ACT to identify students needing remedial help before college will do almost nothing to better prepare students for college. By that point, there is only so much that can be done. If the test

ALL ACADEMIC TEAMS

Test better prepare students?

were administered to 9th graders or, better yet, 8th graders, problems could be assessed, pin-pointed, and focused on all throughout the high school experience. In fact, the ideal situation would be institution of a requirement to achieve a certain score on the reading section of the ACT in order to graduate from 8th grade. No longer would we have the horrendous problems of having scores of students entering Kentucky high schools every year without basic literacy that should've been attained in middle school. Such action would save high schools thousands of dollars annually by cutting out the need for remedial reading classes.

However, I do believe that requiring 11th graders to take the ACT is a brilliant idea. Our state has no national comparison for our students since we have decided to use those delightful little atrocities which we have all come to know and loathe, CATs tests. Use of the ACT will provide a legitimate platform from which we can compare our students to the national averages. Eventually, if our legislators have any sense, the ACT will replace CATs altogether, saving our state millions of dollars annually which can then be put into much more productive educational areas such as teacher pay raises, expansion of language and arts programs, and the purchase of much needed materials.

William Stroupe
FCHS

The ACT is a college entrance exam and to use it to identify students needing help would distract from that purpose. I do not think the ACT should be required. For Frankfort, Kentucky, I think the better alternative is to use the CATs test to measure individual abilities. As an added bonus, if the test actually reflects on the individual, students will take it more seriously.

Molly Costigan
FCHS

Absolutely – requiring juniors to take the ACT would help identify the weaker students and help keep them from slipping through the cracks. It is the standard for college; and whether or not students go to college, it is what high school students should know. Also, it will help college-bound students know what to expect and what they need to work on.

Thomas Baker
FCHS

A test taken in the junior year of high school will not prepare students for college; a proper education will. If a student needs remedial help, then they probably aren't thinking about going to college in the first place. Taking this test will simply tell the student not to waste his or her time or money on a college education but will do no benefit for those students not in need of remedial help.

Sam Kessler
FCHS

I suggest taking the ACT at least once per year. This provides you with a good idea of where you stand academically. Also, doing this prepares you for junior / senior years when the test really counts. Multiple tests can greatly improve test-taking skills.

Bobby Pelosi
FCHS

Yes, I do believe that this will better prepare students for college. Under the current system, the ACT exam is an effective way of determining a student's understanding of high school concepts. Schools can use these results when planning to provide remedial help for students. Also, I believe that taking these tests is essential because in college a majority of class grades will be determined by test grades only.

Elizabeth Bell
FCHS

Yes, I believe this will better prepare

I do think ACT preparation would help students prepare for college. Aside from improving basic test-taking skills (essential in today's society), the ACT will identify learning gaps in high school juniors, and the students can sharpen those weak skills as seniors. By requiring the ACT for everyone, schools must be prepared to address the common problems of the student body.

Jamie Sturm
FCHS

In my estimation it is foolish to waste tax money by giving all juniors the ACT. First, it is unnecessary to give a test to see if people are ready for college. Their GPA can tell us that. Second, one's junior year of high school is too late to try to reverse a pattern started in middle school. If you want to change and shape someone's life, you must start much earlier (freshman year at the latest). An entire book could be



Franklin County High School English teacher Thomas Marshall passes out prom invitations to senior Gary Metcalf last week.

students for college. This will save students money from having to take remedial classes in college. If they take the ACT after receiving help in those areas, it will increase their score and help some students to win scholarships. I wish this had been in effect when I was a junior.

Ben Hardesty
FCHS

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Jonathan Nitz
FCHS

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Ben Hardesty

FCHS

I do not believe that pulling out students for remedial help will better prepare them for how college classes really are. I feel that the most effective way is for teachers to hold their students to higher expectations in the classroom and challenge them daily.

Jonathan Jones

FCHS

The ACT requirement would greatly benefit college-bound juniors. With students who want to go to college but don't meet certain educational requirements, the ACT could help teachers correctly guide these students.

Derek Hughes

FCHS

Yes.

Ryan Wright

FCHS

I believe that the ACT prepares students for college in that it is a standard gauge for scholastic aptitude. Students can identify their strengths and weaknesses which ultimately paves the road to college success.

Samuel Ault

FCHS

Yes, I do believe this will better prepare students, assuming that a class will be taken by the students scoring low on the test. Merely taking the ACT will not help better prepare the students. It will also be necessary for the students to try hard on the test. Students have been known to finish tests as quickly as possible.

Aaron Lee Marston

FCHS

Yes.

Lindsay Thompson

FCHS

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Houston Hardy

FCHS

It's unfair that one test should determine our abilities to perform well in class. In fact, one test can't accurately indicate those abilities. Colleges or counselors should consider our grades in classes compared to the difficulty of those classes to determine whether we need remedial help.

Shaina Khan

WHHS

Yes, I believe it will help identify students needing remedial courses, as well as providing all students with their first 'crack' at the ACT. Many students put it off until the last minute, and this should help prevent that.

Ben Riggs

WHHS

It would help because in college you would pay for those remedial courses that are free in high school. This would put students in line to be ready to jump into college.

Stephanie Howard

WHHS

It would help because they would be able to fulfill requirements in high school instead of paying for remedial courses in college. This way students can be on track for college so they don't have to pay for college for longer than the average time to get a degree.

Sara Thurston

WHHS

Students give ideas on tests and remedial work

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I think it is better because the test will better prepare students for college. I say this because some sort of exit exam will force the students to prove that they do in fact know all the things that they need to know before they go into college.

Andrew Shipp
WHHS

No, this will not help. We need testing for placement much earlier. Junior year is too late for remedial help. Besides, sometimes smart people do bad on tests. I think it's a horrible idea.

Danielle Thomas
FHS

I do not believe that is the best approach. Standardized tests do not encompass all that defines a good student. Perhaps students should be evalu-

ated by what colleges look for in the admissions office to find the best preparation techniques.

Katie Halloran
FHS

I do not. I believe that by 11th grade a student has either had the classes that will prepare them for the test or they haven't, and making them take this test will only bore the students who are going to take it or discourage those who aren't prepared.

We should be more worried about preparing students for college.

Davis Bates
FHS

Yes, I believe that it will better prepare students, because it will point out areas where they need extra help. This will allow the students to have time before they graduate to improve in those areas.

Lynley Cracraft
FHS

I do believe this will better prepare students for college by allowing them the chance to receive help in the areas that are more challenging for them. This opportunity will prevent the students from feeling overwhelmed when they decide to go to college.

Jiordan Griffin
FHS

Faculty photos by *State Journal* photographer Amy Wallot